

1512 Avenue G Gothenburg, NC 69138 308-537-3433 office@aleg.org

# WORD OF LIFE

*Sunday Lessons in December for your devotions*



## December 7

*Second Sunday of Advent*

Isaiah 11:1-10

Psalms 72:1-7, 18-19

Romans 15:4-13

Matthew 3:1-12

## December 14

*Third Sunday of Advent*

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalms 146:5-10

James 5:7-10

Matthew 11:2-11

## December 21

*Fourth Sunday of Advent*

Isaiah 7:10-16

Psalms 80:1-7, 17-19

Romans 1:1-7

Matthew 1:18-25

## December 28

*First Sunday of Christmas*

Isaiah 63:7-9

Psalms 148

Hebrews 2:10-18

Matthew 2:13-23





## Congregation Council meeting summary

November 11, 2024

at 7:00 pm

Present: **Pastor** Doug

Hjelmstad, **President** – Kara Kreis, **Treasurer** -  
Madison Rosse, **Secretary** – Connie L.  
Dalrymple, **Outreach & Hospitality** – Lori  
Johnson-Berke, **Property** - Glen Finke, **Music  
& Worship** - Ernie Blecha, **Parish Ed** – Erica  
Johnson,

Devotions were offered by Ernie through a  
short story, *Things That Make You Think*. It  
reminds us that in our nation's divided  
environment, we should remember that all  
our family histories began as immigrants and  
a little kindness can go a long way.

**Minutes** – October 14 minutes were  
approved as presented.

**Treasurer's Report** – October approved as  
presented.

**Pastor's Report:** The Food Pantry has been  
busy and we've had lots of first-time users.  
Fortunately, donations have increased as  
well, not only from ALC but the community  
as a whole. Lisa handles it all very well and is  
accommodating and kind to all that come  
here.

- Lisa will be out of the office Friday until  
Monday or Tuesday.

**Outreach & Hospitality:** Due to busy sched-  
ules, they have changed the Advent event to

December 7 and are working with Music &  
Worship, sponsoring the movie *The Best  
Christmas Pageant Ever*. That day will be  
busy with worship followed by lunch in the  
Parish Hall and then the movie.

**Music & Worship:** New green paraments cost  
\$2895.00, the altar being \$2250 and the  
pulpit \$645, and will be used along with the  
current ones as they are up a long time  
during the year.

- The Cantata will be December 14. There  
will be no communion that day.
- The organ tuner was here and measured  
for the repairs. Installation will be some-  
time between January and March. The  
pipe maker will do the repairs himself and  
would like a 50% payment to begin the  
project. Council agreed.

**Property:** Discussion was had on the  
condition of the south parsonage.

- The automatic doors are here and will be  
hooked up soon. Until then, they are  
heavy and hard to open.
- Roof repairs will be made in the spring.  
We also have a new insurance representa-  
tive to work with.

**Parish Ed:** Ernie has joined them and they  
are practicing for the December 14 Christmas  
program. They will have goodie sacks again  
this year.

- They average 10 children every week and  
each has a Bible. They're excited that  
they can hi-lite and write in them.

**Discussion Items:** President Kreis would like to have committee budgets as soon a possible so the process is completed by December. She'd also like to meet with the Executive Committee soon to do the personnel side of it.

Discussion was had on counting offering. Ernie will set up a meeting with the counters to develop a policy and report back to Council.

Flowers will be sent to the St. Johns in Eustis for the Dorothea Berke service on Saturday.

The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer at 8:25 pm.

Connie L Dalrymple, Secretary

## Advent Event – Fellowship for Everyone

Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup>

Lunch after worship in the ALC fellowship hall.

**1 pm movie at the Sun Theater  
for the Gothenburg community:**

**“The Best Christmas Pageant Ever”**

*Nobody is ready for the mayhem and surprises that ensue when six of the worst youngsters disrupt the town's yearly Christmas performance.*

**Free admission.**

Join us. Bring the family. Bring a friend.



Children's  
Program

The children of ALC have been practicing during Children's Church for their annual Christmas program on Sunday, December 21st. **Parents please have your children here at 9 a.m. on the 21st** to practice one last time and get into costume. The program will be part of the regular 10 a.m. service. Please join us!

Dear People of ALC,

On the fourth Sunday before Christmas (November 30<sup>th</sup>), the season of Advent begins, New Year's Day on our church calendar. It's the beginning of the liturgical cycle that will slowly weave the story of Jesus' life, death, resurrection, ascension, and the sending of the Holy Spirit. We begin our Christian year, not with frenetic energy and breathless activity, but with waiting. We begin in a place of yearning, for our king. Come, Lord Jesus.

*Be patient, therefore, beloved, until the coming of the Lord. The farmer waits for the precious crop from the earth... You also must be patient. Strengthen your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is near.*

~ James 5: 7 – 8

The word 'Advent' comes from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "coming" or "visit." The season of Advent is when we prepare and anticipate the celebration of our Lord's birth at Christmas even as we anticipate and faithfully await the return of Christ. We also observe Advent in a third way, by naming the daily anticipation and coming of Christ into our individual and communal lives with grace and mercy – with a vision for how we might live in a way that bears witness to the hope we have for the future and the ultimate justice God will bring to all of humankind.

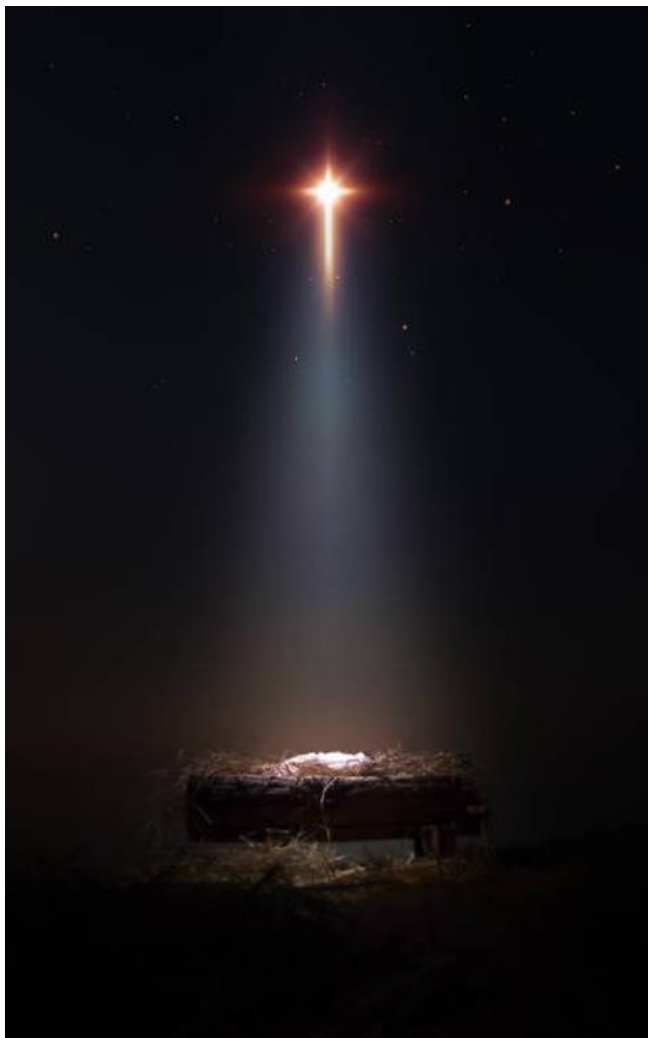
As with the rest of the church calendar, keeping Advent means to be a helpful spiritual practice. It is not a command or a rule, but an invitation to pay attention to what God is stirring in us, to see what might be created. Our appointed gospel readings come from Matthew which speak deeply of the living hope we know in Christ Jesus. Advent is the time when we practice watching for grace; a time when we give extra attention to how Christ enters into the deepest and darkest corners of humankind and our own lives.

*I wait for you, O LORD, my soul waits; in your word is my hope.*

~ Psalm 130: 6

We mark the season of Advent as days grow shorter and darkness closes in with the approaching winter solstice. Darkness in our culture is often thought of in gloomy or foreboding terms. The holy darkness and spirit of Advent invites us into silence and stillness that beckons us to rejuvenation and renewal. Advent bids us to pause and look clear-eyed into the darkness and asks us to name the dark, impoverished places in our hearts and in the world in order to invite the light of Christ to shine into every shadowy corner. We dwell in a world shrouded in violence and warfare, poverty and need; Advent tries to tell the truth about the brokenness in the world. To keep Advent is to lean into our deep yearning for God to make everything right, to make all things new.

Waiting in Advent hope with all of you,  
Pastor Doug Hjelmstad



Join us for *An Evening in December, a Christmas Cantata*, on Sunday, December 14th. It is filled with traditional carols and original anthems that will stir your hearts and fill them with the warmth and spirit of the coming Lord. The Cantata will be performed at ALC at 10 a.m. and at First Presbyterian Church at 5 p.m. Free will donations for the Good Samaritan Fund and the Christian Charity Fund will be collected at both performances.

### **Prayer Requests**

**Remember in Prayer: Members:** Gail Block, Elsie Cyriacks, Pam Gage, Jim Gonzales, Judy Hicken, Molly Magana, Sue Rosell, Corey Stull, Lavonne Werkmeister, family of Shelly Goldfish;

**Family & Friends of Members:** Kristy Connelly, Lori Edwards, Keith Fickenscher, Chad Fuller, Mairik Holbein, Jamie Reiter, Tip Ronnekamp, Shirley Stombaugh;

**Service Members:** Colton Bebensee, Sam Erb, Johanna Keiser, Brandon Reinke, Maggie Trenkle.

*If you or a family member are ill or in the hospital, let us know so Pastor Doug can visit you and include you in our prayers or if a family member is on the prayer*



## *December Birthdays & Anniversaries*

### **Happy Birthday**

- |                        |                    |                             |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Alex Ballmer         | 11 Al Ballmer      | 25 Jesus                    |
| Alisha Jones           | Hannah Boyd        | Willard Keiser              |
| Brandon Bihlmaier      | 12 Craig Finke     | Kim Russman                 |
| Scott Sherard          | Brigham Ricley     | Jake Scherer                |
| 2 Chloe Daharsh        | Ashlyn Richeson    | 26 Tiffany Donner           |
| Brynleigh Ehlers       | 13 Jan Blecha      | J Buddenberg                |
| Darren Franzen         | Becky Randecker    | 27 Burke Finke              |
| Chris Haynes           | 15 Ashleigh Brown  | Carol Keiser                |
| 3 Stephanie Ricley     | Elloise Colwell    | 28 Gail Block               |
| 4 Maddie Good Roessler | Barb Hotz          | Joe Keiser                  |
| Cade Hicken            | Matt Schnackenberg | Kyndal Holmes               |
| Jordan Rossell         | 16 Gage Andersen   | Jovie Thompson              |
| 5 Joni Jacobsen        | Lori Johnson-Berke | Logan Ricley                |
| Alyvia Streeter        | 17 Ron Stevens     | 29 TJ Brown                 |
| 6 Baker Jorgenson      | Sue Schledewitz    | Suzanne Holmes              |
| Jerry Macken           | 18 Sutton Good     | 30 Jack Barkmeier           |
| Darla Schlake          | Kristofer Pearson  | Amy Mahlberg                |
| 7 William Harms        | Corbyn Tonniges    |                             |
| Roger Neujahr          | 19 Roine Ecklund   | <b><u>Anniversaries</u></b> |
| Kya Roth               | 21 Roger Donner    | 7 Mark & Patti Aden         |
| Krista Tonniges        | Melodi Rogers      | 11 John & Melissa Bell      |
| 8 Alex Bartlett        | 22 Mary Finke      | 16 Greg & Erin Feather      |
| Luke Franzen           | Diane Gaudreault   | 17 Ross & Kressy Ristine    |
| Torey Keiser           | 23 Rhonda Russman  | 18 Tim & Cordelia Aden      |
| 10 Shae Brown          | Larry Aden         | Steve & Lori Berke          |
| Janet Haas             | 24 Theresa Brooks  | 23 Ben & Roni McNally       |
| Jeff Harm              | Carol Slack        | 28 Chad & Taylor Schmiett   |
| Lori Long              |                    | 30 Dave & Deb Clark         |
| Darren Aden            |                    |                             |



## Sunday Volunteers

### **Acolytes -**

December 7 - Hadley Ostergard, Gretta  
McKim

December 14 - Fletcher Grabenstein

December 21 - Eli Erb, Cooper Roth

December 24 - 5 - Hadley Ostergard,  
Gretta McKim

7- Alec Wagner

December 28 - Blake Brown

January 4 - Cooper Roth

### **Ushers -**

December 7 - Roger Koehler, Bob Ronnekamp

December 14 - Craig & Mary Finke

December 21 - Ken Christensen, Joyce Hudson

December 24 - 5 - Kurt Stevens, Connie  
Stevens

7 - Kim & Lori Kitzing

December 28 - Pat Jobman, Dave Keiser

January 4 - Glenn & Sue Finke

### **Communion Assistants -**

December 7 - Jim & Lori Long, Kim Kitzing

December 21 - Scott & Jackie France, Kendra  
Boyd

December 24 - 5 - TJ & Ashleigh Brown,

Carolyn Hicken, Noel & Joni Jacobsen,

Tammy McMichael, Kevin Boyd

7 - Stacy Anderson, Lisa Wagner,  
Sophie Wagner

### **Reader -**

December 7 - Jo Fuller

December 21 - Carol Keiser

December 24 - 5 & 7 - Kara Kreis

January 4 - Kevin Boyd

### **Welcome Center Host -**

December 7 - Emma Christensen

December 14 - Jena Rahjes

December 21 - John Bell

December 24 - 5- Jonie Birnie

December 28 - Lisa Bihlmaier

January 4 - Lori Long

### **Greeters -**

December 7 - Larry & Sue Schledewitz

December 14 - Dan & Sharise Scherer

December 21 - Dave & Wenda Keiser

December 24 - 5- Corey & Keri Roth

7- Randy & Cressy Rossell

December 28 - Larry Franzen, Karan Smith

January 4 - Greg & Erin Feather

### **Sound -**

December 7 - Eldon Rodine

December 14 - Lindly Anderson

December 21 - Kurt Stevens

December 24 - 5- Eldon Rodine  
7- Lindly Anderson

December 28 - Scott Aden

January 4 - Eldon Rodine

### **Offering Counters -**

December - Marci Ostergard

January - Ernie & Jan Blecha

### **Communion Bread -**

December 7 - Michele Warner

December 21 - Carolyn Hicken

December 24 - Carol Wahlgren, Karan Smith,  
Joni Jacobsen, Jan Blecha

January 4 - Lisa Wagner

### **Communion Support Person-**

December 7 - Scout Bell

December 21 - Marci Ostergard

December 24 - 5 - Macy Finke

7 - Linda Rodine

January 4 - Natalie Hengen

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
7 9a Choir 9a Property 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's Church 11a Linger Longer	8 7a Men's Breakfast	9 Pony Express Cluster Text Study	10 2:30-3:30p JAM 6p Worship 6:30 Meal 7p Confirmation Cantata Practice	11	12	13
14 9a Choir 10a Christmas Cantata 5p Cantata at Presbyterian	15 1:30p Communion at Stone Hearth	16 Pony Express Cluster Text Study	17 2:30-3:30p JAM 6p Worship 6:30 Meal 7p Confirmation	18	19	20
21 10a Service of Holy Communion/ Children's program 11a Linger Longer	22	23	24 Christmas Eve Service 5pm & 7pm	25	26	27
28 10a Service of Lessons and Carols 11a Linger Longer	29 1:30p Communion at Stone Hearth	30	31	<i>December 2025</i>		